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Rep. Matsui Participates in Hearing on Proposed Comcast-NBC Universal Merger

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Today, Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-05) participated in the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, and the Internet hearing examining the proposed combination of Comcast and NBC Universal. Representative Matsui's statement, as prepared for delivery, is below:

"Like other major mergers or joint ventures, there will be a real impact on consumers and the marketplace and this one is no different. Comcast is the dominant cable provider in my home district of Sacramento, providing service to more than 200,000 households. This joint venture will only enlarge their footprint in Sacramento.

"Over the last few days, I've received numerous emails from my constituents wanting to know what this deal would mean for them. They want to know if it means higher cable rates. My constituents want to know if they will be able to continue to receive independent programming they are used to, without any unwarranted interference or preference. They want to know what it will mean for the distribution of online video, and they want to ensure it continues to be open to all and is preserved so that they can view their favorite programs when they choose. They want to know the ramifications this joint venture may cause within industry.

"Will there be a domino effect whereby Comcast competitors are likely to combine or merge with others in order to compete in the marketplace? Creating a media and entertainment environment where, only a few will be heard?

"Additionally, my constituents rely on local affiliate stations for local news and information. Would this merger put local NBC affiliates, not currently owned by NBC itself, at a competitive disadvantage from a programming standpoint? Comcast has made a series of pro-active commitments on some of these subjects. I look forward to further exploration of these and other concerns today and in the weeks and months ahead.

"Ultimately, I believe that this proposed merger should not leave consumers with less choice, lower quality, less diversity, and higher programming costs. As the FCC and Department of Justice review the proposed merger, it is my hope that they consider every aspect, particularly its impact on consumers, competition, and innovation."

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